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A study on Enrolment Trend in CIC Programme of Distance Education under IGNOU in Assam.



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Introduction:

Distance Education System is a great innovation of education to meet the ever increasing and diversified educational demands of this present age. It is a comprehensive theoretical concept as well as a new unconventional mode of public instruction. Conceptually, it enunciates first that- education is a life-long process and second, that- the educational system should not only help in spreading of education among all but also cater to the specific needs of each individual. It is most beneficial for removing the restrictions of formal system of education and tackling the problems of school drop-outs, working adults, housewives and learners from economically backward sections of the society.

The idea of Distance Education was first originated in nineteenth century in England. Later on this system got great popularity and success in different countries of the world. Distance Education was introduced in India first at Delhi University in 1962, under the Directorate of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education. It entered the era of Distance Education through Open University since 1982, when, the Andhra Pradesh Open University (renamed as B. R. Ambedkar Open University in 1992) came into existence. Distance Education gathered its main strength in India after establishment of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) on 20th September 1985 under the Act of Parliament in 1985 (ACT NO: 50 OF 1985). In just two decades IGNOU has emerged as the largest Mega University in the democratic world. It has also been gaining great popularity and success with the recognition as the centre of excellence in Distance Education by the common wealth of learning. Today, IGNOU serves the educational aspirations of over 3.0 million students of India including the students of 36 countries abroad under 338 academic programmes. IGNOU started its functioning in Assam with the establishment of a study centre at Guwahati University in 1986. IGNOU Regional Centre in Assam was established at Guwahati, Chandmari on 20th March 1996 as the 17 Regional Centre of IGNOU, with a statewide network of centres. Up to the year 2011, a total number of 67 IGNOU centres have

been established all over the state. The present study is an attempt to highlight about the enrolment trend of IGNOU programmes in Assam under Open Distance learning with a special reference to Certificate in Computing (CIC) Programme. The objectives of the programme CIC are : i) to assess the learner's potential for computer education at tertiary level through the distance mode and ii) to fulfill the need of an "adult computer literacy" programme, iii) to provide learners as an alternative channel for admission to BCA, MCA, Programmes of IGNOU. Duration of this course is -six months, entry qualification 10+2 or equivalent. Number of Courses to be completed are five. These are –CIC-O1: The Context, CIC-O2: The Technology, CIC-O4: The Applications, CIC-O5: Microsoft Office, Practical-40 hours. All the courses are compulsory.

It is widely known that distance education has a great demand in various countries of the world. Because it emancipates education from the boundaries of educational institutions and carries the benefit of education to each and every one who desires to learn or desires to improve his or her thirst for knowledge. Computer Education has also a great demand in the modern world. But in Assam, there were no sufficient opportunities for this education. Formal system of education catered to the educational needs of a limited number of people; the system has to be supplemented by alternative means of education to meet the needs of all. IGNOU has been offering better opportunities in this concern. But it was observed that most of the common people were not properly aware about the opportunities of Distance Education or IGNOU. The investigator hopes that the findings of the present study would be helpful in understanding the attainment levels of distance education learners on various components; it will give some feedback to the policy makers, planners and the Distance Education functionaries to design appropriate strategy in future and it will also be helpful to the future researchers in the same field.

The study on enrolment trend specifically in respect of IGNOU programmes is hardly found. However, some studies in this field have so far been made by different scholars and academicians from time to time. Mention

Table- Year-wise and Session-wise Enrolment trend in the programme CIC:

Sessions	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	630	374	182	140	95	34
July	415	176	112	49	27	16
Total	1045	550	294	189	122	50
Percentage of increase (+) /decrease (-)		-47.37%	-71.87%	-81.91%	-88.33%	-95.22%

may be made about the study by-V. Mulay, R. L Phutela and R. NADIR, (1986), who have conducted a project on- Correspondence Education in India Central Institute of Education technology NCERT (UGC financed) They emphasized on-the status of correspondence education institutes with regard to enrolment, eligibility standards, relationship with other departments, flexibility of courses, procedures of office, organization of instruction, funds and expenditure and performance of students. R Dutt, (1987) has conducted a study on- in School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education under University of Delhi, School of care course. This study observed the increasing trend of enrolment . A similar study was conducted by M Das, (1992) which emphasised on the approaches to learning and academic performance of students in traditional and open urine in a compares time perspective. Indradevi (1985) in her philosophical analysis of the concept of Distance

The Objective and Methodology:

The specific objective of the study is stipulated as -to study the Enrolment Trend in CIC Programme of Distance Education under IGNOU in Assam during 2001-2006. As per the methodology of the study the Descriptive Survey Method was applied. The study is mainly based on primary data collected from the IGNOU study centres falling under the study area. For this purpose a total number of 19 study centres of IGNOU in Assam have been covered where 2001 was considered as the base year. Out of the 19 study centres 9 study centres were selected as the sample by applying Random Sampling Technique.

Findings:

Enrolment in the CIC programme has shown a good participation at the initial stage but at the later stage the trend of enrolment in the programme CIC has shown a gradual decrease during the period of six years from 2001 to 2006. There has been a continuous

declining trend of enrolment which aroused 1,045 in 2001 and ultimately declined to 50 only in 2006. This declination was very sharp during the period of 2002, (47.37%) and 2003, (71.87%). This declination continued gradually as 81.91% in the year 2004, 88.33% in 2005 and 95.22% in 2006. This declining enrolment trend during the six years is presented in the **See table.1**

Conclusion and Suggestions:

This study is basically empirical in nature requiring detail survey and queries on the enrolment trend of the programme CIC under IGNOU in Assam. During the six years duration, from 2001-2006 a decreasing trend in enrolment has been observed. The enrolment trend particularly in CIC Programme under IGNOU should not be decreased. There may be some reasons like- Opening up of alternative courses of computer sciences in various institutions both in the public and private sectors and the content and syllabi of the concerned course has not been changed throughout the time in response to the increasing demand in the modern social scenario. To upgrade the trend of enrolment in CIC programme some effective measures can be undertaken. For example- proper selection of the course contents, more practical facilities, preparation of study materials in regional languages, effective utilization of electronic media etc. Moreover, IGNOU should take care of sending study materials and other infrastructural facilities to the study centres in time as per as possible and should provide proper counselling so as to bridge the information gap in between IGNOU and the students. In addition to these, efforts should be made to establish that- Certificates, Degrees and Diplomas of IGNOU are accepted as equivalent to the degrees awarded in the conventional system. This kind of measures may definitely be helpful in yielding better enrolment result in Distance Education under IGNOU in Assam.

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